

# IOWA BIRD LIFE

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE  
IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

VOL. XXVII

JUNE, 1957

NO. 2



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

Publications of the Union: Mimeographed letters, 1923-1928; "The Bulletin," 1929-1930; "Iowa Bird Life," beginning 1931.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$2.00 a year. Single copies 50c each. Subscription to the magazine is included in all paid memberships, of which there are four classes, as follows: Contributing Member, \$10.00 a year; Supporting Member, \$5.00 a year; Regular Member, \$2.00 a year; Junior Member (under 16 years of age), \$1.00 a year.

EDITORIAL AND PUBLICATION OFFICE  
WINTHROP, IOWA

## MAGAZINE COLLECTING AS RELATED TO ORNITHOLOGY

By MARTIN L. GRANT

Iowa State Teachers College  
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

Many years ago, while idly perusing a copy of Vogue Magazine, I was struck by a colored photograph of a mounted specimen of the South American Tanager, *Tanagra chilensis*, shown in an advertisement for fabrics. This is one of the brightest-colored birds there is, with conspicuous patches of scarlet, blue, indigo, green, gold, black, and brown, giving rise to its Latin-American name of "Siete Colores" (seven colors). I had previously secured some birdskins of this species in the foothills of the Colombian Andes, but, never having seen a colored picture of it before, I cut the advertisement out and put it into a collection of bird pictures.

This collection now includes about 15,000 pictures and popular articles, all obtained from newstand-type magazines. Several hundred kinds of periodicals have furnished these, particularly Life, Look, National Geographic, Colliers, Time, Sports Illustrated, Saturday Evening Post, and Woman's Day, and there are hundreds more which publish an occasional bird picture. It is practically and financially impossible to subscribe to all these periodicals, but considerable help is obtained from several friends who generously allow me to check their old magazines before they are thrown away.

The pictures are cut and folded (if necessary) to a standard letter-sheet size (11 x 8½"), three-punched, and put into two sets of loose-leaf notebooks, the smaller pictures being pasted or clipped onto that size paper. One of the sets is arranged systematically, according to an international classification of bird families, so that all pictures of egrets, for example, are kept together. The other set is divided by subjects, such as feathers, bill shapes, nests, and conservation. Whenever a picture represents more than one family or subject, an attempt is made to secure two or more copies, so that neither an index nor cross-references are necessary, a table of contents being sufficient. Only ephemeral materials that might not be indexed by abstracting journals are cut up in this way, the more formal pamphlets, scientific articles, regular bird journals, etc., being kept entire in a separate collection.

The collection has its greatest value in connection with teaching classes in bird study, general biology, ecology, genetics, evolution, etc. It is a simple matter to display them with an opaque projector, and several folders of pictures are kept together to illustrate particular topics. The pictures are also useful for bulletin-board purposes, to help students working on special projects, and just to show to people who want to know what a particular bird looks like. A more detailed description of uses appears elsewhere (Grant, 1952).

This assemblage of pictures and articles is actually only one of many, similarly prepared, on about 50 other subjects, including all groups of animals (e.g., shells, insects, fish, reptiles, and mammals) and plants (mushrooms, ferns, wild flowers, trees), most other sciences (astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, geography, and anthropology), and various other fields the writer happens to be interested in (painting, sculpture, photography, costume, humor, education, religion, transportation, sex education, etc.)

An outgrowth of the picture collection was the accumulation of a file of single copies of each type of magazine. This collection of periodicals in all fields, in many languages, and from many countries, now totals considerably over 5,000 titles, which number is actually small compared to the total number of magazines which are or have been published all over the world. Fuller

notes on this part of the collection may be found in two Iowa newspapers (Owens, 1951; Krishef, 1956).

About 100 of those in the magazine collection are periodicals, some no longer published, in the field of bird study. Presentation of some of the titles indicate the range these cover. Some are general: Audubon Magazine, Avifauna, Migrant, Wilson Bulletin; other represent particular institutions: Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association Report, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Research Bulletins; or restricted localities: Western Ornithologist, Long Island Bird Notes, Journal of Minnesota Ornithology, Nebraska Bird Review; or even cities: St. Louis Bird Club Bulletin, and Topeka Audubon News. Many of them are named after specific birds: Auk, Bittern, Bluebird, Cardinal, Chickadee, Condor, Dickcissel, Flicker, Night Heron, Oriole, Osprey, Phainopepla, Prothonotary, Roadrunner, Roller, Canary Journal, Warbler, Jack-Pine Warbler, Wren, and Seattle Wren. Others are concerned largely with one subdivision of bird study: Oologist, Nidiologist, Aviculture, and Bird-Banding Notes. The editor of Iowa Bird Life, Fred J. Pierce, has been most helpful in helping add to this collection.

To one interested in ornithology it is fascinating to browse through old copies of these magazines and find early notes by now-famous local naturalists, such as "Contents of an Owl's Nest," by W. G. Savage, of Hillsboro, Iowa, in the Osprey for June, 1897, and "Nesting of the Great Horned Owl," by Carl Fritz Henning, in the Bittern for January, 1901. One of the writer's first published articles was in the Passenger Pigeon for May, 1927 (not the later



DR. GRANT WORKING ON HIS COLLECTION OF MAGAZINES  
Photograph by Bob Krishef of the Waterloo "Courier."



Wisconsin publication of the same name), which lists on the masthead, as Curator of Birds, Roger Tory Peterson, then 18 years old!

The ornithological magazines which have been published in Iowa are listed below, arranged chronologically, except that no. 10 is out of place to maintain continuity in a series:

Title	Dates	City	Editors
1. Hawkeye Ornithologist & Oologist	1888-1889	Cresco	E. B. Webster, F. D. Mead
2. Ornithologist and Botanist	1892	Des Moines	L. Balliet, W. S. Sanford
3. Naturalist	1893	Des Moines	Naturalist Pub. Co.
4. Iowa Ornithologist	1894-1898	Salem, Avoca, Cresco, Ames	D. L. Savage
5. Western Ornithologist	1900	Avoca	C. C. Tryon
6. Bittern	1900-1901	Cedar Rapids	G. M. Hathorn
7. Letters, Iowa Orn. Union	1923-1928	Sioux City Ogden, Des Moines	M. Bailey, W. Rosen, T. C. Stephens, K. Nelson, A. Palas
8. Bulletin, Iowa Orn. Union	1929-1930	Spirit Lake, Ames, Iowa City	F.L.R. Roberts
9. Iowa Bird Life	1931-date	Winthrop	F. J. Pierce
10. Wilson Bulletin	1925-1938	Sioux City	T. C. Stephens
11. Sioux City Bird Study Review	1934	Sioux City	R. D. Hissong
12. Dickcissel	1935-date	Sioux City	Sioux City Bird Club
13. Phoebe	1940-?	Council Bluffs	Co. Bluffs Bird Club
14. Warbler	1944-date	Des Moines	Des M. Audubon Soc.

Of the above periodicals, no. 2 included some botany, and no. 3 some geology; no. 2 had been published in 1891 at Binghamton, N.Y.; no. 10 was previously published at Oberlin, Ohio, and, after leaving Iowa, has continued at several localities; nos. 4, 5, and 6 represent a series, as do nos. 7, 8, and 9; no. 12 is a continuation of no. 11; five of these were mimeographed instead of being printed (nos. 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14). The writer has at least one copy of each, except for nos. 7, 11, and 13. For further notes on most of these serials see Pierce (1933).

In addition, there have been published in Iowa several serials on natural history, or on science in general, which have contained from several to many articles on birds: Agassiz Record, American Magazine of Natural Science, Curio Bulletin, Curio Collector, Davenport Academy of Natural Science Proceedings, Hawkeye Observer, Iowa Academy of Science Proceedings, Iowa Naturalist, Iowa State College Journal of Science, Iowa State Laboratory of Natural History Bulletins, Nature Notes from various state parks, and The Young Collector. Some publications in other special fields of science have also delved into ornithology occasionally.

In addition to the single copies of all types of magazines, a complete file is maintained of all issues of some of the more interesting or valuable, such as Life, Holiday, National Geographic, Esquire, and numerous scientific and technical journals. The set of Life, complete, includes 1,055 issues! Where possible, an attempt is made to obtain the first issue (volume 1, number 1) of each magazine, but, so far, only 700 have been found available, though an additional 550 are represented by at least one issue of the first volume.

The magazines in the general collection are arranged in five groups according to size, as exemplified by the following titles: Quick, Reader's Digest, Time, Life, and the United Nations Courier. Within each size group, they are subdivided into about 200 subject classifications, such as General, News, Men,

Women, Juvenile (even comic books!), Religion, Crime, Education, Science, Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Gardening, Art, Photography, Sports, Fiction, Humor, Geography, and History. A complete card index, alphabetical by title, is maintained. While many of these periodicals have been distributed gratis, the most expensive one (*Nation's Heritage*) sold for \$30.00 a single issue, and it was worth it. It is difficult to put a price on things few people are interested in, but a reasonable value for the collection, albeit impossible to duplicate, would be around \$15,000.

A few examples of some of the curiosa in the collection are: *The Reader's Digest* in the 13 languages in which it has been published, as well as the other 19 editions which appear, including Braille; *Neurotica*, for those who admit it; *Sunbathing and Nudist* magazines from a dozen countries, all fully illustrated; 15 magazines published in this country for negroes; some 50 national magazines which have had articles by local people; tourist magazines published by several of the states; quite different magazines which have the same title; long titles, such as *Archiv der Julius Klaus-Stiftung für Vererbungsforschung Sozialanthropologie und Rassenhygiene*; *Cackle and Crow*, for poultry-raisers; 14 different square-shaped magazines, 11 x 11"; magazines which have changed their name, e.g., *Friday* (1940-41), becoming, in order, *Dan Gilmor's Scoop* (1941), *Scoop* (1941-42), and *Picture Scoop* (1942-43); a single issue coming out in separately-bound parts, e.g., *House and Garden* in two, and *Biological Abstracts* in nine; and odd titles like "Ha", and, not to be outdone, "Ha-Ha."

Although the writer knows of several people who collect only first issues of magazines, or collect serials on a single special subject, he is not aware of the existence of any collection as general as this. Great numbers of the titles are of types which are not saved by public libraries, and thus the collection has considerable historical value as a set of Americana. When *Life*, *Look*, and *Pic* started in 1936-7, they were immediately followed by a flood of imitators, none of which have survived, many of them producing only one issue. One of each of these was saved, with this idea of preservation in mind. One of the results of a trip to South America was the bringing back of a representative sample of 100 Latin-American publications, as one of the simplest ways actually to demonstrate what the culture there was like. Certainly few facets of life are more representative of what people are thinking about.

One of the greatest reasons for the unpleasantness that exists in the world, at all levels from the personal to the international, is the provincialism that results from the narrowness of our routine contacts, a result of the specialization in our division-of-labor society. It is in this field that the collection has had its greatest value, exerting a broadening influence on all these who have had much contact with it, in terms of the increasing of general knowledge and the understanding of different attitudes of other social, religious, and cultural groups.

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## PHOTOGRAPHING WITH A BINOCULAR OR TELESCOPE\*

By FRED W. KENT

7 East Market St.  
IOWA CITY, IOWA

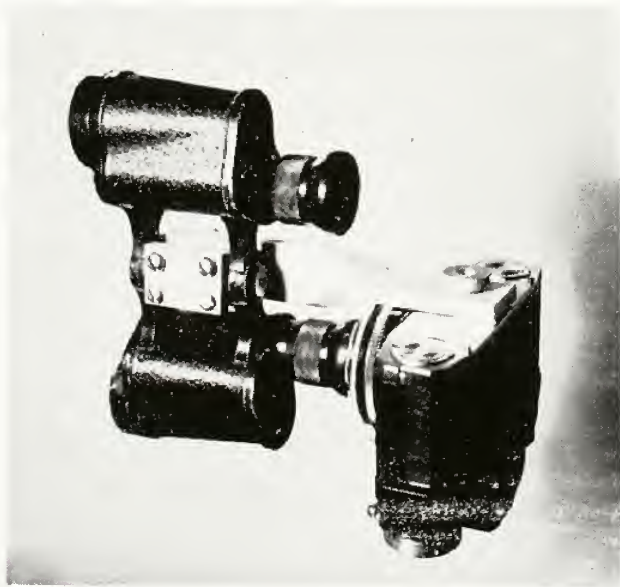
Telescopic photography at best is a very expensive and difficult process largely confined to professionals but still attractive to the amateur interested in wild life photography. Adaptation of binoculars and scopes for this purpose offers some satisfaction to the owner of both kinds of equipment without the large investment necessary for the high quality telephoto lenses and expensive cameras. Brackets for this purpose can be purchased for moderate sums or home-made devices are not too difficult for those so inclined.

### ADAPTATION OF BINOCULARS

1. For single-lens cameras (35mm and roll-film cameras). A bracket to hold the camera in front of one side of the binocular, so mounted that the other eye-piece of the binocular is free for viewing and focusing. First it is necessary to focus both sides of the binoculars with the same eye in order that the viewing side will exactly match the side attached to the camera. Then, in use, as a scene is focused visually the focus in the camera will be the same. Where the eye-piece fits the camera it is advisable to provide a sleeve or fitting to prevent stray light from entering the lens of the camera.

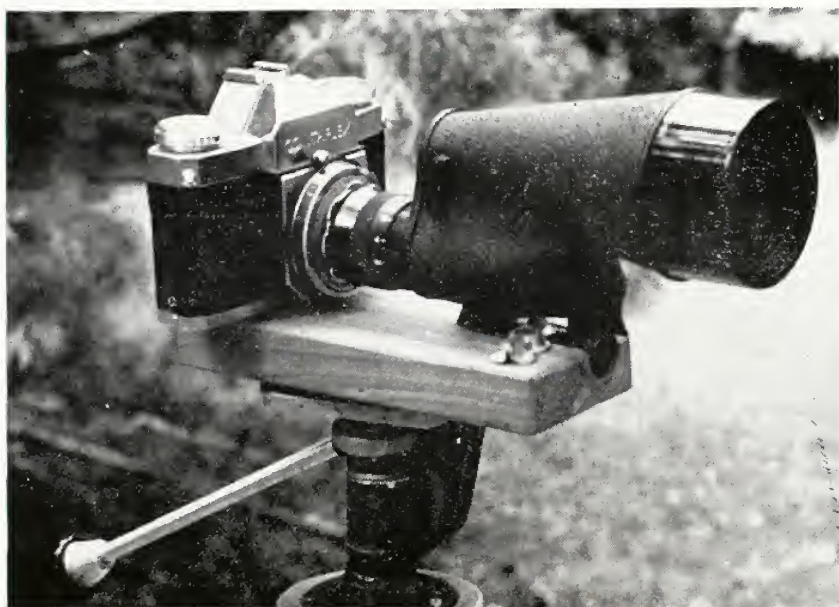
2. For twin-lens cameras. (Rolleiflex and similar). A bracket to hold the binocular (again with both sides alike), exactly centered to both the taking and viewing lenses of the camera. This outfit can then be operated in the normal manner of operating with this kind of camera.

\*The bird photographs by Mr. Kent in Iowa Bird Life have been much admired and enjoyed by our readers. We asked him to describe his special photographic equipment. We are grateful for the detailed information on camera techniques which he gives us in this article.—Ed.



CAMERA ATTACHED TO BINOCULAR





CAMERA MOUNTED WITH ONE-HALF OF BINOCULAR

Note that binocular is dropped into a slot in the wooden base and held with a storm-window button.



FRED KENT FOCUSING HIS CAMERA ATTACHED TO 'SCOPE

3. For single-lens reflex cameras (Exakta, Contaflex, and similar). A bracket similar to one for a single-lens camera, but in this case either side of the binocular will do as the image is viewed and focused directly through the taking lens of the camera. This combination is probably the most satisfactory as it shows exactly the result of the combination lens system up to the moment of taking the picture.

4. Adaption to Telescope. Only the single-lens reflex camera or ground-glass type (Speed Graphic or similar) is advised for use with a scope as the increased power and smaller field require more accuracy in finding and focusing. A bracket or base which will hold both camera and scope rigidly and in line can be devised to suit the equipment, with provision for attachment to a tripod or other rigid mount (which is a must for this kind of photography, as it is also for viewing).

#### USAGE

With this optical combination the camera stop or diaphragm must be used at its largest opening, for if used as in ordinary camera procedure it will cut down the picture area when used at the smaller openings. The speed of the combination depends on the power and diameter of the objective lens of the binocular or scope, usually from f8 to f16. So the exposure must be controll-



GETTING THE SUBJECT INTO ONE EYE-PIECE OF THE BINOCULAR AND PHOTOGRAPHING THROUGH THE OTHER



ed by the shutter speed alone. With faster black and white films exposures can be made up to 1/300 sec. in sunlight and with the faster color films (Ektachrome, Anscochrome) at 1/60 sec. Recent appearance on the market of a much faster color film makes it possible to take color pictures at speeds up to 1/150 sec., and of course in much duller light. Some exposure tests are advisable to help determine the best speeds to use. So with a 6x or 7x binocular attachment it would be possible to hand-hold the outfit at the faster shutter speeds, but the scope combination is much more sensitive to camera vibration and requires a solid support and practice for smooth operation.

This long-focus, fixed-aperture lens combination also limits the depth of field in sharp focus so that only a single object can be focused sharply at a time. Care is required to focus for maximum sharpness as the combination is at best not as critical as the expensive telephoto lenses. But this out-of-focus background is very often an advantage as it eliminates distracting details and helps to make the principal object stand out more clearly.

In use the camera scale is set at infinity and the binocular or scope is used for focusing. This entails some adaptation to the manipulation of the equipment for rapid and accurate shooting, and practice is recommended as many subjects are not too cooperative. With the ordinary cameras, close-ups of birds are only possible at nests or feeders so this kind of outfit, in spite of its slowness and bulk, does offer a range of possibilities for unlimited and interesting pictures at a very low cost.

## MASS MIGRATION OF CLIFF SWALLOWS

By J. DONALD GILLASPEY

Route 3  
LAMONI, IOWA

During the week beginning August 26, 1956, I noticed increasing numbers of Cliff Swallows among the 20 to 30 Barn Swallows constantly flying around as I mowed and raked alfalfa. On August 30 and 31, countless thousands of Cliff Swallows appeared. I either have not been so observant in other years or our heavy, localized rainfall of 16 inches during July and August was favorable for the development of insect life which attracted the swallows from neighboring drought-stricken areas.

At noon on August 30 I noticed about 200 Cliff Swallows resting on or fluttering about the barn roof. This was more Cliff Swallows than I had ever before seen so I carefully counted them and watched their actions. One thing I noticed particularly was the ease with which Cliff Swallows could perch on the vertical side of a building. Any little nail head or splinter made a substantial toe-hold for them and 25 to 30 were perched on the side-wall of the barn at times. Barn Swallows attempt to perch in such a place occasionally but generally give up and perch on the electric cables between buildings.

Hundreds of swallows were around the farm pond adjacent to a cornfield. The birds would perch on the corn tassels a while, then take their turn skimming around over the water. This appeared to continue all afternoon. During a 3-mile drive into town that afternoon, little groups of 10 to 15 swallows could be seen in all directions, flying low over the fields. I estimated there were a dozen or so swallows over each 5 acres of ground as far as I could see in any direction.

I have wondered if this was a normal Cliff Swallow migration flight or if possibly the general storm conditions which prevailed over Iowa for the three consecutive, preceding nights had pushed the birds south. Heavy general thunderstorms occurred over most of the northern half of Iowa, while our local weather was fair at the time. I was curious to know what all these

thousands of birds would do or where they would go. They kept up an almost endless milling about over the cornfields as long as the fading daylight showed their dark forms against the sky.

A similar performance was repeated the next day, August 31. The birds were not so much in evidence during the forenoon but gradually increased in numbers during the afternoon, until by nightfall thousands were perched on the corn tassels or milling about low over the cornfields. This continued again as on the previous evening until their forms could no longer be distinguished in the approaching darkness.

On the second day of this I was really excited and called several other bird students. But by the next day, when some persons came, the flood-tide of migrating Cliff Swallows had passed on. Only a few stragglers could be seen around the farm buildings along with the usual Barn Swallow population.

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## FRANCIS LE ROY ROBERTS

1893 - 1957

Francis LeRoy Roberts was born at Jackson, Minnesota, on July 19, 1893, to Alfred C. and Alma Bowen Roberts. After graduating from the local high school and two years of rural teaching, he completed the curriculum at the Des Moines Still College of Osteopathy. Ten years of successful medical practice at Spirit Lake, Iowa, led him to decide to refresh and broaden his training. A year of preparatory study in sciences at the Iowa State College, Ames, was followed by five years in the College of Medicine at the State University of Iowa, Iowa City. He graduated with honors and served his internship at the Lincoln General Hospital, Lincoln, Nebraska. Broken in health after several more years of eminent, sacrificial practice at Spirit Lake, he took a position on the Ogallala Sioux Reservation at Pine Ridge, South Dakota, hoping that the more regular hours would restore his strength. But, as his circulatory ailments became more serious, he and his wife retired to Corona, California, to be near a daughter. There, on May 20, 1957, Dr. Roberts died, after several years of invalidism. His ashes have found repose in the Lakeview Cemetery, Spirit Lake, a community in which he had labored for his fellow men nearly all his life. Friends may send contributions to Frank Bedell, Spirit Lake, Iowa, to establish a loan fund in the Doctor's memory at the State University of Iowa, which was his wish.

In 1914, he was married to Mary Price of Spirit Lake, who continued her education to advanced degrees. The partnership was known to many of us as Drs. Frank and Mary Roberts. Dr. Mary, daughters Velma (Mrs. Norman Stevens) of Corona, California, and Mary (Mrs. Jack Musgrove) of Des Moines, Iowa, with their husbands, three granddaughters, his stepmother, and a sister survive.

Since boyhood, Dr. Roberts was a member of the Presbyterian Church, until, as the denomination was not represented in Corona, California, he joined the Congregational Church there. He was a member of the Spirit Lake Chapter of Rotary International, of the Twilight Chapter, A.F.&A.M. at Spirit Lake, and of the National Research Council of the Masonic Lodge. After enforced retirement he was honored with life memberships in the Dickinson County, Iowa, Medical Association, the Iowa Medical Society, the American Medical Association, and the American College of Cardiology. Two days after the Doctor's death, a letter came from Herbert Holy Elk, a member of the tribal council at the Pine Ridge Reservation, stating that they planned to take him into the tribe in July of this year as "Wanblee Toka hay", meaning Leading Eagle, a bird respected greatly by the Sioux Indians.



DR. F. L. R. ROBERTS  
President, Iowa Ornithologists' Union, 1931-32

As a doctor, Francis Roberts was of the highest order. He healed, and taught health practices, joy in living and pleasurable outdoor recreation. He was a Charter Member of the Iowa Conservation Association, and an early member (1924) in the Iowa Ornithologists' Union of which he was President, 1931-1932, Consulting Biologist of the National Emergency Conservation Committee, past President of the Governing Board of the Lakeside Laboratory of the State University of Iowa, founder and sponsor of the Spirit Lake Nature Study-Camera Club, and first President of the first Spirit Lake Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, Inc. In 1929-1930 Dr. Roberts was editor of "The Bulletin," the first printed publication of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union. It did much to arouse interest and to put the Union on a firm foundation. During the first five or six years of Iowa Bird Life, he was a frequent contributor. For some years he was an active bird-bander in cooperation with the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey. His extensive rock collection was donated to the Spirit Lake public schools. He had written extensively on natural history subjects for magazines of national circulation, and had published several articles in medical journals.

We remember Dr. Roberts as an excellent student and a genial companion on numerous occasions. On our annual Union bird trips he devoted much time in teaching birds to beginners, patiently and enthusiastically. At a number of our annual meetings he led a discussion period in which he was remarkably adept at drawing everyone into pleasant participation. In general con-



servation matters he was very well informed, free of prejudice, and quick to see merit in improved practices based on sound principles growing out of scientific research. As a conservationist, he was a leader with a positive program for wise use of our lives and our resources.

His spirit is well expressed in this poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to commemorate the Fiftieth Birthday of Louis Agassiz, the renowned naturalist:

And Nature, the old nurse, took  
The child upon her knee,  
Saying: "Here is a story-book  
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come, wander with me," she said,  
"Into regions yet untrod;  
And read what is still unread  
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away and away  
With Nature, the dear old nurse,  
Who sang to him night and day  
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,  
Or his heart began to fail,  
She would sing a more wonderful song,  
Or tell a more marvelous tale.

—GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON, Department of Zoology and Entomology,  
Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

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## BIRD NOTES OF FORT DEFIANCE STATE PARK AND VICINITY

By M. L. JONES

Fort Defiance State Park  
ESTHERVILLE, IOWA

The year 1956 was an especially successful one for bird observation in the northwestern section of Iowa. Three new birds were added to my life-list. (Observations chiefly in or near Fort Defiance State Park.)

**Snow Bunting.** About a mile north of the park and a half mile west of Estherville two Snow Buntings were seen along the roadside by Loren Jones and the writer. The weather was everything that is required to bring these birds down from the north. It seemed that they would be blown much farther south by the bitter cold winds and drifting snows. On February 4, 1956, six Snow Buntings were seen about 3 miles west of Ryan Lake. On February 5, while the writer was accompanied by Mrs. Jones, three Snow Buntings were observed near the south side of the park. On March 1, a total of 150 Snow Buntings were seen, 100 of them a mile east of Cheever Lake and a flock of 50 about 3 miles west of Ryan Lake.

**Robin.** While Robins cannot be placed on the list of unusual birds, the one seen shivering in a sheltered thicket at the edge of Ingham Lake on February 4, did appear to be rushing the season.

**Redpoll.** On February 5, 1956, a flock of 16 Redpolls was observed one-half mile south of the west park entrance. Mrs. Jones and the writer watched them eating from the tall weeds in the manner of Goldfinches.

**Painted Bunting.** Observations on the Painted Bunting have been reported in *Iowa Bird Life* (Sept., 1956, pp. 69-70). One bunting only was seen on May 30 from as near as 6 feet through the window while it ate seeds from dandelions. Fortunately the bird stayed near by for over two hours, giving Mr. and Mrs. B. O. Wolden of Estherville an opportunity to see it.

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher.** This species, which was seen here on June 7, is also reported in the Sept. 1956, issue of *Iowa Bird Life* (pp. 69-70).

**Blue Grosbeak.** On June 8 the Blue Grosbeak was the object of our search. Walter Bennett and I made two previous attempts to find it in north-west Iowa, but always before it had "just been seen, or heard, the week before." Others have reported it from Oak Grove State Park near Hawarden, but we were not so fortunate. Watching and listening in likely looking areas, we proceeded south to within 20 miles of Sioux City, finally spotting one on a wire fence. It made two or three flights to the gravel road where it appeared to be eating. It was disturbed many times during the next two hours by trucks and cars as it alighted on fence and telephone wires near us. Mr. Bennett set up photographic equipment in hope that it would return to its favorite spot in the gravel road, but it was not seen again during the next two hours.

**Burrowing Owl.** On October 9, while driving alone on Highway 17 about 3 miles northwest of Rockwell City, a Burrowing Owl was observed huddled down behind the road grade out of the chilly wind. No natural holes were anywhere to be seen, but it was near a large culvert. The bird did not act like a Burrowing Owl until it was disturbed, then it stood up to its usual height and after a few "bobs" flew a short distance into the nearby plowing.

**Mockingbird.** On October 15, the strange bird that flew into our rose bushes where the Brown Thrasher nests every year proved to be a Mockingbird. It wouldn't say a word but flew in and out during the next four hours or more.

**Tufted Titmouse.** Among the birds at our feeding shelf, we have missed most of all the Tufted Titmouse here at Fort Defiance. From the fall of '52 up through last winter the tufty was never seen at our feeders, but in the fall of 1956 a big sunflower drying program was in progress. One Tufted Titmouse was observed engaged along with many Chickadees in the hopeless process of carrying off all available sunflower seeds. At a bird-banding demonstration the distress call of one tufty brought forth two more, and at another demonstration on November 24, the boy scouts of Webb, under the exceptionally capable leadership of Noel Rust, were treated to the unusual sight of five Tufted Titmice in our traps at one time. At our 3-acre sunflower patch 10 miles southeast of the park, three Tufted Titmice were observed feeding on December 7. At least three more individuals are also reported from Spencer by Drs. Everett and Eunice Christensen.

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#### NECROLOGY

**David L. Savage**, naturalist, botanist, and editor of the "Iowa Ornithologist" published in the '90's, died at his home near Mount Pleasant, Iowa, on March 5, 1955. Burial was at Salem, Iowa. He was a member of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union beginning in 1944, and was later elected an Honorary Member for his contributions to the natural history sciences in Iowa. We are not publishing a full biography at this time because this has already been done in *Iowa Bird Life*. Professor H. E. Jaques published a biography, "David L. Savage: Naturalist and Botanist" (with photograph), in our March, 1947, issue, pages 4-7.

## THE BREEDING BIRDS OF LEWIS, IOWA

By DENNIS L. CARTER

Dept. of Zoology and Entomology  
Iowa State College  
AMES, IOWA

While engaged in research work on the Mourning Dove at Lewis, Cass County, Iowa, during the spring and summer of 1956, I had an opportunity to determine what other species were nesting in the area.

Lewis has a human population of about 500 and a tree population of about 3,500. Overgrown orchards, grassy lots, brushy areas, and many large, old American elms provide numerous nesting sites for birds, and a noteworthy number and variety were present there during the past summer. The variety of habitat in Lewis attracted species which I was not accustomed to finding in towns—for example, Wood Pewee, Eastern Meadowlark, and Indigo Bunting.

Although I kept data only on Mourning Dove nests found in Lewis, I obtained positive evidence of nesting (nest with eggs or young) for the following 27 species: Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Flicker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, House Wren, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Starling, Bell's Vireo, House Sparrow, Red-wing, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Bronzed Grackle, Cowbird, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Dickcissel, Goldfinch, and Chipping Sparrow. Catbird and Brown Thrasher were among the most common nesting species, being exceeded in abundance only by Mourning Dove, Robin, and House Sparrow, which were the three most numerous species. On June 29, I found a Bluebird nest in a fencepost. On July 12, I observed a Bell's Vireo carrying food to a juvenile Cowbird which was nearly full-grown and quite capable of flight. While the vireo was away, the Cowbird searched for food itself, but as soon as the foster parent returned it opened its mouth to receive a meal. The Cowbird was considerably larger than the vireo, and they presented a rather amusing sight. I was surprised to find Red-wings nesting in Lewis away from their normal habitat. One nest was found in a spirea bush in the city park and another about 10 feet from the ground in an apple tree. A Rose-breasted Grosbeak nest with young was found June 18. On July 5, Dickcissel nest containing one egg was found in a catnip plant in a weedy area near the lumber yard. On July 10, the nest contained four Dickcissel eggs and one Cowbird egg, and when last observed on July 12, it contained two Dickcissel eggs and one Cowbird egg. Chipping Sparrow nests were frequently found, and many of these were in spirea bushes.

In addition to the 27 species which definitely nested, 14 other species were present in the town throughout the summer and probably nested there also. These species were: Black-billed Cuckoo, Screech Owl, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Wood Pewee, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Red-eyed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Yellow-throat, Eastern Meadowlark, and Indigo Bunting.

Other species were seen near Lewis during the summer months although not actually in town. Twenty-two such species were found within a mile of Lewis and can be considered summer residents. They were: Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Crested Flycatcher, Phoebe, Rough-winged Swallow, Crow, Tufted Titmouse, Wood Thrush, Yellow-throated Vireo, Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Western Meadowlark, Towhee, Field Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, and Song Sparrow. Many of these species were seen in wooded and brushy areas along the East Nishnabotna River near



Lewis. Additional species such as Sparrow Hawk, Pheasant, Loggerhead Shrike and Grasshopper Sparrow were seen along roadside routes farther from town, but they are not included in this survey.

During the summer of 1956, there were at least 63 resident species of birds in Lewis and the immediate vicinity most of which probably bred. A total of 41 species were present in the town of Lewis itself and positive evidence of nesting was obtained for 27 of these species. Although research has shown that Lewis has a high population of Mourning Doves, this locality is apparently attractive to other species as well.

## "LIFT UP THINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS"

By WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH

3119 East Second St.  
SIOUX CITY, IOWA

A rewording of the gentle admonition from the 121st Psalm, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains," is very applicable to the serious watcher of birds. For in lifting the eyes to the beauty of the hills, one is certain to lift them beyond to the bright sky above and there he sees a marvelous spectacle of nature—birds in flight. In looking to the hills and beyond, every bird-watcher enjoys sights that bring exhilaration at the moment and pleasant memories years later. In the great Missouri River valley it is still possible, in the spring, to see hundreds or even thousands of geese and ducks in air in the course of one day. It is an inspiring sight to most of us.

It is my habit to sit out in a comfortable lawn chair and waste countless hours scanning the skies for birds. This is especially easy to do in the fall, when the weather is nice and the various birds are slowly moving southward. Many years ago I was indulging in this pleasant occupation, when I saw a faint speck in the sky. I turned my glasses to the object, which I assumed was a large hawk. To my surprise on focusing, I discovered a Great Blue Heron floating on a thermal updraft. The long, trailing legs didn't seem to bother at the moment as this great heron swung around with all the ease and grace of that master of the air currents, the Red-tailed Hawk. Apparently the big bird was enjoying the flight to the fullest. To folks in the South the sight of a soaring heron would not be worth watching, but to a lone bird-watcher here among the cornfields of Iowa, the sight was never to be forgotten.

Once, when collecting on the famous "Coteau des Prairies" near old Fort Sisseton in South Dakota, I watched a thrilling aerial battle between a Duck Hawk and a male Marsh Hawk. These two beautiful hawks fought from tree-top level to heights almost out of sight in the sky. The acrobatics and power-dives they made still linger in my memory as one of the highlights in my several trips to the Fort Sisseton country.

In a more prosaic vein, I recently watched a small flock of migrating Blue Jays from my chair and noted their strong peculiar flight, much unlike their normal, rather floppy flight. These birds were high in the air and binoculars were a distinct help. There were about 20 birds in the flock, and in the early morning sunlight, the flashing of their wings was like so many burnished-silver flippers. One laggard in the rear must have heard the screaming calls of other jays below, for twice he left the flock, and each time tried to catch up. Finally, the third time he broke with his southbound brothers and came volplaning down to earth.

Of the dozens of rare moments I have enjoyed in nearly a lifetime of bird-watching, there is one that will live in my memory until the last. During the late spring of 1947, I had the pleasure of being associated with the

Albert Lehmann Wrecking Company, which was engaged in razing the vacated Army Airforce base near Ainsworth, Nebraska. As might be expected, I was out in the field immediately after every evening meal to watch the birds of the short-grass country and to listen to their lovely songs. Everywhere Vesper Sparrows were singing their dainty evening lays. Lark Buntings were singing beautifully from the lower altitudes, while far above and often almost out of sight Horned Larks were pouring forth their somewhat less musical songs. A pair of Upland Plovers flew over and as I watched them, a large white bird appeared in the sky. A lone Whistling Swan, flying with measured beat but on swift wings, was crossing the evening sky. Whether it had been held up by injury or sickness, I would never know. It was winging northward, with a background of rosy sky, to join its fellows somewhere near the Arctic Circle. Such a sight never fades from the memory of a confirmed bird-watcher.

## THE ESTHERVILLE CONVENTION

By MYRLE M. BURK

Secy.-Treas., Iowa Ornithologists' Union

The Iowa Ornithologists' Union held its 35th annual meeting, Saturday and Sunday, May 18 and 19 at Estherville, Iowa, the guests of the Fort Defiance Chapter (Ladies) and the Emmet County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, with headquarters at the Gardston Hotel. Ninety-five members and visitors including 14 bird watchers from the adjoining states of Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin, tramped the muddy shores of lakes, the swamps and uplands, and the prairie farmlands in rain and fog and a bit of sunshine and saw 168 species of birds during the two days.

One young Snowy Egret at Ingham Lake was the outstanding find; many were thrilled to see a pair of Canada Geese, presumably nesting, at Hottes Lake. This is the first recent recording of the Snowy Egret in northwestern Iowa. It was identified by its yellow feet and its habit of tramping or stirring the mud to arouse its living food, a characteristic peculiar to this species.

The field trips were ably led by Myrle L. Jones, Tom Moen, Jim Sieh, Harold Johnson, Elmer Wogen, Cliff Hedrick, and Olaf Wolden. Some groups spent the previous Friday also exploring this territory, which included Fort Defiance State Park, Cheever Lake, Four Mile Lake, Hottes Lake, Sunken Lake, Mimiwakan State Park, Ryan Lake (a dry lake bed), the Ingham-High Lake area and Swan Lake. The entire mornings, after a five o'clock breakfast, of Saturday and Sunday were spent in the field.

Saturday afternoon, after luncheon, Bruce Stiles presided over the program and business meeting held in the Shore Room of the Gardston Hotel. At the beginning of the program he introduced Elmer Wogen, a former member of the Iowa Conservation Commission, and now mayor of Estherville, who, representing our hosts, the Emmet County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, welcomed the members of the IOU and guests to Estherville to bird watch in the 7000 acres of state-owned land in the Iowa Great Lakes area. As a souvenir we were given a leaflet, "Early History of the Estherville Region."

Two Charter Members, B. O. Wolden of Estherville and Fred J. Pierce of Winthrop, were then honored by introduction by Bruce Stiles.

The President then introduced the first speaker, Dr. Edward L. Kozicky, president of IOU, 1953-1955, now director of the Conservation Department of Olin Mathieson Chemical Corporation, East Alton, Illinois. Dr. Kozicky presented "Statistics and August Quail Inventories in Iowa." The method used to count the quail population in areas of southern Iowa was described in detail. Conservation officers were assigned to make the survey on 40-acre

tracts, which were, in part, selected by means of aerial photos. Forty acres, a basic land unit in Iowa, is a sufficient area to support a covey of quail, if cover and food are available. Three types of 40-acre tracts in each of 14 southern counties of Iowa's primary quail range were selected. They represented three types of habitat: A) Cover and food together; B) Cover away from row crops; C) Entirely in timber. Dr. Kozicky gave copies of the discussion to the audience. His paper is to be published in Iowa Bird Life.

Dr. George O. Hendrickson, Professor of Zoology and Entomology at Iowa State College, revived a type of discussion of the IOU under the title, "Your Birding Experiences." Members of the group participated freely and interesting discussion developed.

Bruce Stiles reported seeing the Snowy Egret at Ingham Lake and described its characteristic habit of stirring the mud with its feet in order to get food. Dennis Carter reported a pair of Swainson's Hawks in Story County which were probably nesting. Further reports of this hawk's nesting were by Paul Moore at Rock Creek Lake in Jasper County, where they were present throughout the nesting season, and Fred Pierce reported seeing them near Charles City.

The probability of the Black Rail in Iowa was discussed by Myrle M. Burk. Discussion of its elusive nature and the type of habitat which it frequents led to the question of the presence of the Yellow Rail. Dr. Hendrickson pointed out that the rails are a vanishing race of birds. W. W. Barrett described the shucking of a peanut by a Chickadee. Charles C. Ayres, Jr., described a pet Snowy Owl with a broken wing. He mentioned that it was docile, liked attention, and described the food that it took; it had a special liking for liver and kidney.

The meeting adjourned for a short recess, after which the business session was called to order by President Stiles. Secy.-Treasurer Burk gave the below report of receipts and expenses for the year;

Receipts:

Balance, May 25, 1956	\$ 945.44
Membership dues	669.25
Profit, 1956 convention	36.66
Check-lists sold	16.79
I.B.L. reprints	28.75
Advertising	15.00
Received for cuts	7.95

Total	\$1,719.84
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Expenses:

1956 Convention	\$ 35.97
Postcards and stamps	2.93
Record book	5.38
2 prepaid check books	2.00
Publishing Iowa Bird Life	705.13
Printing reprints	10.95
1000 dues notice cards	24.62
2000 IOU bird check-lists	16.84
500 Letterheads and envelopes	11.95

Total	\$ 815.82
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Balance, May 18, 1957	\$ 904.02
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She also gave the following figures on the status of the membership: Total members, 246. New Members 1956-57, 33. Junior Members, 2. Supporting Members, 12. Contributing Member, 1. Members living outside of Iowa, 38.



The business meeting continued with a report from Editor Pierce, who, as in all former years, asked the members for continued and perhaps better cooperation in sending in notes and longer articles for publication so that the magazine could be continued at its present standard. Librarian Ennis next gave his report, and stressed the necessity of having more back numbers of Iowa Bird Life to fill orders from libraries and others. He asked members who did not care to keep their copies to send them to him. M. L. Jones moved that someone be appointed and authorized to investigate the cost of sleeve emblems. President Stiles appointed Peter Petersen, Jr. to serve in this capacity, and also named the following committees: Nominating, Charles C. Ayres, Jr., Myrle L. Jones; Auditing, Myra Willis, Mrs. Geo. Hendrickson, Mrs. Paul Moore; Resolutions, Jim Sieh, Mrs. Gladys Black, Mrs. E. J. Petranek. The afternoon meeting then adjourned.

The annual banquet was held in the Shore Room of the Gardston Hotel Saturday evening. Bruce F. Stiles, an able and witty master of ceremonies, introduced the speaker, Dr. Vernon D. E. Smith, Professor of Surgery, University of Minnesota. Vying with our president in the art of story telling, he began his lecture by relating several in the Norwegian dialect. The pictures, "The Wildlife of Alaska," which were photographed during several trips to Alaska, were fascinating to each member of the audience. Against a background of the harsh, barren, precipitous mountains and their beautiful streams, live the black bear, the grizzly, the wolf, the three species of mountain sheep, the mountain goat, the moose and the people (Indians), surviving because of alertness and adaptability to this environment.

Following the field trips on Sunday, May 19, there was a luncheon at the Gardston Hotel, after which the final section of the business meeting was held. Myra Willis, chairman of the Auditing Committee reported that the records of the Secy-Treasurer were excellent. M. L. Jones, chairman of the Nominating Committee, read the names of the new officers (as given on the title page of this issue). They were elected by a unanimous ballot cast by the Secretary upon a motion by Dr. Robt. Vane and a second by Mrs. Harold Peasley. Invitations for the 1958 convention were reviewed, and the possibility of meeting at Davenport, Vinton or Oskaloosa were discussed, with the final decision to accept the invitation from Vinton. Dr. Vane suggested that the place and time of the 1957 fall meeting be decided by the officers and the Executive Council. Following a discussion of methods for developing more publicity for the organization, Mrs. Vane suggested that the Executive Council appoint a Publicity Committee for the coming year. Jim Sieh read the Resolutions as adopted by his committee. The compilation of the composite bird list of the various groups who were in the field that morning occupied the remaining time until adjournment; 148 species had been seen during the forenoon trips. Farewells were regretfully exchanged by old and new friends, and thus another fine convention passed into the history of our organization.

**Resolutions.**—I. Be it resolved that non-active, local bird groups be encouraged to become active, and in those communities where no local group is in existence, one be established.

II. Be it resolved that the IOU give special recognition to the first person in our state to provide Jack Musgrove, Museum Director of State Historical Society, with a valid record of the Black Rail in Iowa.

III. Be it resolved that the membership remain ever alert to any legislation contrary to the wise use of our natural resources, and so notify their federal or state representatives of their disapproval.

IV. Be it resolved that each local bird club select a capable person to search out and encourage new talent to provide written material for our editor, Mr. Pierce, to publish in Iowa Bird Life.

V. Be it resolved that the death of David Savage, editor of the old "Iowa Ornithologist", printed from 1894-98, be recorded in his memory in Iowa Bird Life.

VI. Be it resolved unanimously that our thanks be extended to each individual and group that have made this gathering a success.

James G. Sieh, Chairman

Mrs. Gladys Black

Mrs. E. J. Petranek

**Attendance Register.**—AMES, Dennis Carter, Dr. and Mrs. G. O. Hendrickson; BURLINGTON, Jim Boulton; BURT, Harold H. Burgess; CEDAR FALLS, Davis Bullis, Madeline Carpenter, Dr. Martin Grant, Frank Manos, Dale Wood; CEDAR RAPIDS, Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Petranek, Lillian Serbousek, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane, Myra Willis; DES MOINES, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Berkowitz, Mr. and Mrs. Woodward Brown, Dr. and Mrs. H. R. Peasley, Jim Sherman, Bruce Stiles; DOLLIVER, Mr. and Mrs. Neill Finn, Jim Jessen, Nadine Stillman; ESTHERVILLE, Alice Haywood, Mr. and Mrs. C. Hedrick, Harold Johnson, Rose Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones, Robt. Klema, Mrs. Arvil Parks, Ethel Rodgers, Mrs. Wilson Towell, Mr. and Mrs. B. O. Wolden, Elmer, Fred and Olaf Wolden; GRINNELL, Bertha Miller; LEHIGH, Dean Roosa; MANLY, Pat Lako; MT. VERNON, Dr. J. H. Ennis; NEWTON, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Moore, Obara Parker; NORTHWOOD, Mrs. John Bottleman; OSKALOOSA, Wayne Partridge; OTTUMWA, Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Ayres, Jr.; PLEASANTVILLE, Mrs. Gladys B. Black; SIGOURNEY, Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Millikin; SIOUX CITY, Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Hanna, Mark Jones, Gertrude Weaver, Mary Weaver; SPENCER, Dr. and Mrs. Everett Christensen, Mrs. F. P. Hartsook, Blanche Waters; SPIRIT LAKE, Howard Graesing, Mrs. B. A. LaDoux, Tom Moen, James Sieh; TRIPOLI, Dorothy Brunner; WATERLOO, Dr. Myrle M. Burk, Geo. Faulkner, R. M. Hays, Dr. C. W. Robertson; WHEATLAND, C. Esther Copp; WINTHROP, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Pierce; EAST ALTON, ILL., Dr. E. L. Kozicky; ALBERT LEA, MINN., Charles Flugum; FAIRMONT, MINN., Neal Carter; MANKATO, MINN., Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Luwe; MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., Dr. Vernon Smith; SHERBURN, MINN., M. F. Johnson, Carol Stoteran; VALENTINE, NEBR., Robt. Timmerman; WISNER, NEBR., Mr. and Mrs. John Lueshen; LA CROSSE, WIS., Pauline Abel, Gladys Grube, Janice Johnson, Total registered, 95.

**Composite List of Birds Seen on the Field Trip, May 19, 1957.**—Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue, Green and Black-crowned Night Herons, Snowy Egret, Am Bittern, Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Pintail, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teal, Am. Widgeon, Shoveller, Wood Duck, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Marsh Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Sparrow Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Partridge, Virginia Rail, Sora, Am. Coot, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Upland Plover, Willet, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted, Solitary, Pectoral, White-rumped, Baird's, Least, Stilt and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Dunlin, Dowitcher, Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, Wilson's and Northern Phalaropes Herring and Franklin's Gulls, Forster's and Black Terns, Mourning Dove, Horned Owl, Nighthawk, Chimney Swift, Ruby-thr. Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Red-bellied, Red-headed and Downy Woodpeckers, Eastern Kingbird, Crested and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Eastern Phoebe, Traill's and Least Flycatchers, Wood Pewee, Horned Lark, Tree, Bank, Rough-winged, Barn and Cliff Swallows, Purple Martin, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, House, Marsh and Sedge Wrens, Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Robin, Wood Thrush, Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrush-

es, Veery, Bluebird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Loggerhead Shrike, Starling, Solitary, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Black and White, Tenn., Orange-crowned, Nashville, Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Cape May, Myrtle, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted, Black-poll, Palm, Mourning and Pileolated Warblers, Ovenbird, Northern Water-thrush, Yellowthroat, Yellow-breasted Chat, Am. Redstart, Bobolink, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Redwing, Baltimore Oriole, Grackle, Cowbird, Scarlet Tanager, Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, Goldfinch, Towhee, House, Savannah, Grasshopper, Sharp-tailed, Vesper, Chipping, Clay-colored, Field, Harris's, White-crowned, White-throated, Lincoln's, Swamp and Song Sparrows. Total, 148.

Additional Birds Seen on Saturday, May 18, 1957.—Common Egret, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Cooper's, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks, Bobwhite, Am. Golden Plover, Sanderling, Least Tern, Hairy Woodpecker, Western Kingbird, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Prothonotary, Golden-winged and Cerulean Warblers, Louisiana Water-thrush, Lark Sparrow. Total, 20. Grand total, 168.

#### AN OPEN LETTER FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Dear Members of Iowa Ornithologists' Union:

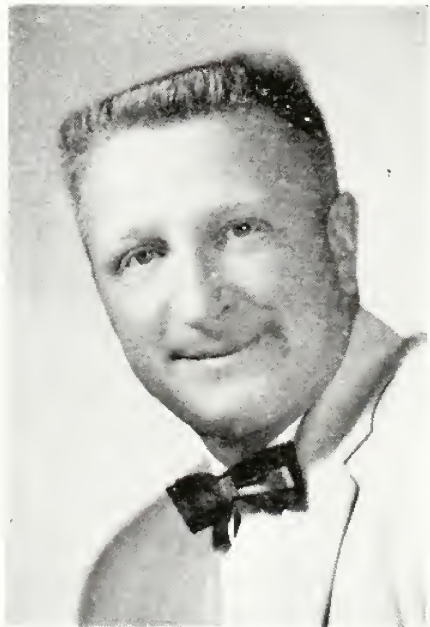
May I say in a few words what can only be said by many pages, that I am very honored by the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and that you feel me adequate to be your President for the coming year. I will do all I can to justify your confidence in me.

I have enjoyed membership in this splendid group for many years, and Mrs. Moore and I feel that our spring conventions are about the pinnacle of our year's pleasure and relaxation. We have made so many wonderful friends and know that others must feel the same way.

The absence of many young people was worthy of note at the convention at Estherville last month. Since the future of conservation and bird protection for the coming generations of bird enthusiasts lies in the hands of our youth, we should do more as clubs and individuals to develop their interests in ornithology while they are young.

The main objective of our membership should continue to be a mutual enjoyment of our wild birds and the promotion of this interest for the future.

Sincerely,  
JOHN PAUL MOORE



JOHN PAUL MOORE



## GENERAL NOTES

**American Pipits at Lamoni.**—I observed American Pipits in my alfalfa field from October 14 to December 15, 1956. Previous to the middle of October we had had six weeks of complete drought. Then on October 13 we had a hard rain and considerable wind. Next morning, on October 14, we went out into the alfalfa fields to count the cattle and check for bloat. There was a flock of about 30 pipits, together with three or four longspurs. The notes of the pipit sound very much like its name if pronounced peep, peet' with accent on the second syllable. They are distinct and clearly heard, individual call notes as peep, peep, peet', or Peep, peet, peet', uttered as the bird takes wing. The whole flock does not rise together, but first one, then another, then another, each giving the call notes as it rises into the air.

On several occasions during the next 60 days I observed these pipits in the alfalfa field, noticing their white outer tail feathers and their walking habit while on the ground. On December 15 I saw five pipits. We were hoping to be able to list them on our Christmas census by that time, but this was my last observation. I can find no record of their being listed on a Christmas census in Iowa.—J. DONALD GILLASPEY, Route 3, Lamoni, Iowa.

**Notes on Birds Seen on the Estherville Convention Field Trip.**—Perhaps readers of Iowa Bird Life who were not in attendance at the convention will be interested in a few details on the unusual birds recorded. The Snowy Egret was seen at Ingham Lake by a good many persons who attended. It was seen closely and studied at considerable length under the best of conditions on May 18 and 19, and M. L. Jones saw it again on May 20 and 21.

The Yellow-breasted Chat record is also noteworthy. Dr. Martin Grant and his students found this bird sitting on a fencepost near a thicket and brushy area at Prairie Lake (Dickinson County, Center Grove Township, Section 23, May 19, 1957). James Sieh and I observed it in the same locality a short time later.

In looking through the Iowa Distributional Check-list (Iowa Bird Life, XXIV, December, 1954), I find that Red-breasted Merganser, Willet, Parula Warbler, and Sharp-tailed Sparrow are not listed for northwest Iowa. All four species were seen on the Sunday (May 19) field trip. The Red-breasted Merganser was observed in the Ingham Lake area by Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Petranek. The Willet was seen by various observers in the same area on both May 18 and 19. The Parula Warbler was observed by several persons in the Hottes Lakes locality (Dickinson County). Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane found Sharp-tailed Sparrow in the Ingham Lake area on May 18, and Albert Berkowitz and Woodward Brown found it in the same locality on May 19.—DENNIS L. CARTER, Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa.

**Two Worthwhile Booklets.**—We call the attention of our readers to two recent booklets of considerable interest. The first one is entitled "Cultivate Your Garden Birds," a publication of 35 pages by the Minnesota Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. It was prepared by Anne Winton Dodge, W. J. Breckenridge, and D. W. Warner, and contains many useful suggestions for attracting birds by the placing of bird houses, bird baths and feeding devices. There are sections on summer feeding, the control of less desirable species, and the development of bird habitats. Particularly useful is a list of plants recommended for attracting birds. Twenty illustrations, including plans for houses and feeding shelters, supplement the text. The booklet sells for 35c.

Capper Publications brings out its second bird booklet, "Introduction to Our Bird Friends." In an attractive format and covering 28 pages, L. B. Carson describes a second series of 50 birds. Each species is shown in an accurate



## FIRST ROBINS IN MCGREGOR IN 1937

Between 150 and 200 Robins stopped in the back yard at the home of Mrs. Esther Kersten McGregor, Iowa, during the blizzard and high wind on the morning of March 15. They fed on dried-up apples left on and under the apple tree, and Mrs. Kersten put out grain and other food for them. The Robins fed and rested in yard most of the forenoon and then flew away. This photograph was sent to us by L. J. Lindemann of McGregor.

drawing by Orville O. Rice. The descriptions are brief but give good pointers for identification of each bird and something about habitats, distribution or interesting facts. An index and occurrence table shows at a glance what months of the year the respective birds are present. There is a four-line jingle under each bird picture—this no doubt intended for younger readers. The rhyme under the Bob-white sums up the old disagreement between bird lovers and hunters:

Some like to shoot  
And watch him fall,  
While others like  
To hear his call.

The booklet is certain to have a wide educational influence with the distribution the publishers will be able to give it. It is sold by Bird Book Dept., Capper Publications, Inc., 8th and Jackson Sts., Topeka, Kansas, price 25c a copy.—F. J. P.

**Bird Records for the Ottumwa Region in 1956.**—I had a very satisfying spring bird list in 1956. I identified 133 species, and included in this were 20 species of warblers—a rather unusual number for this part of the state, I believe.

I saw the Blue Grosbeak at very close range. This is quite a rare bird here. On May 18, 1956, I saw a male bird sitting on a post of a fence dividing a road (really a lane) and an open field at the edge of a wooded area. This was near the Y.M.C.A. Youth Camp about 2 miles southeast of Agency, a small town 5 miles east of Ottumwa. He sat there for perhaps three minutes before flying away and I observed him from a distance of about 3 feet through 7 x 35 binoculars. It was a clear day and the time was 11:30 a.m.

Mockingbirds seemed to be regular summer residents in the region. I have seen them every summer for the last four years in two different localities. I saw my first one on August 12, 1953, about 6 miles south of Ottumwa in a hilly area with just a few trees. I positively identified this bird as it sat on a telephone wire along the road. I saw one again on August 19, 1953, at the same place. On July 23, 1954, I observed two birds in approximately the same place. In 1955 I had a number of observations on the following dates and within a mile of the first observation: June 14, 19, 21, 24, 27; on the 27th I saw five and heard one sing. I spent quite a little time there and it sang all the time I stayed. These five were not all together, but two were close to each other, the singer being one of these. On July 1, I saw two birds, with one singing in almost exactly the same spot as the preceding two. I observed one on the 10th of July, two on the 11th, and one each on the 19th, 21st, and 23rd.

In 1956, I observed one Mockingbird at the Y.M.C.A. Youth Camp on May 8, this location being in an entirely different part of the county. This one sang. On May 17, I again saw one at the old location south of Ottumwa. On May 23 there was one and on May 26 there were two at this place. That ended my observations for 1956 as I was not able to be out again. My husband is Wapello County Engineer and they were building a new road in the vicinity south of town. I often accompanied him and was in the field a good many times in 1956.

On April 4, 1956, I observed 30 White Pelicans on the Des Moines River near the Cliffland bridge, which is about 7 miles downstream from Ottumwa.

Another interesting little incident which gave me quite a thrill happened early in the summer of 1956. I was spraying water on some flowers with the garden hose when a Ruby-throated Hummingbird flew directly through the spray within 10 feet of me. With the sun shining upon him he sparkled like



a beautiful jewel within the rainbow formed by the sun and water. It is wonderful to have these fleeting bits of beauty to remember and treasure.—MRS. ORVILLE T. UPP, 1707 Albia Road, Ottumwa, Iowa.

**Correction.**—In the article, "Bird Observations at Marble Rock," March issue, page 20, the third line should have read "A flock of 14 Blue and Snow Geese . . ." instead of 214. This error occurred through the Editor's misreading of a longhand note.

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### MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Dr. George Hendrickson sent a copy of the latest IOU Check-list to Philip A. DuMont and thanked him and Dr. Lincoln for their painstaking assistance in the revision of the Iowa list. In reply, a letter from Phil DuMont contains this interesting paragraph: "Both Fred Lincoln and I feel that your committee has done an excellent job in preparing this Check-list. We have both reviewed all the names and can find absolutely no mistakes. You are certainly to be commended on the careful job you did in this preparation."

The 1956 Christmas bird census taken by a group of observers at Shenandoah failed to reach us and for that reason was not published in our March issue. A carbon copy of a census prepared for Audubon Field Notes was sent to us but did not arrive. To our knowledge, this was the first time a bird census intended for us was ever lost in the mail. Mrs. Robert Bordner, Mr. and Mrs. Francis M. Braley, Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Vaughn, and Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Collins took the census at Shenandoah on December 30; 39 species and 1,977 individual birds were listed. Although we could not include it in our March issue, we are glad that it was published in Audubon Field Notes (April, 1957, pp. 180-181) and is now on permanent record.

Each year several Iowa bird clubs take a May bird count and try for a big list. We have been furnished the results of three of these May bird counts in 1957. At Sioux City 13 members of the Bird Club made a count on May 12. They listed 91 species and 1,523 individuals. The localities visited included Logan Park and Graceland Park cemeteries, Brown's Lake and woods, Badger Lake, Stone Park, McCook Lake, Mud Lake, and Adams Woods. The Des Moines Audubon Society, represented by 16 observers, made a count on May 11, with a total of 160 species. Areas visited were Dove and Kinglet woods, Brenton's Slough, Fisher's Lake, Flint Acres, Crocker, Walnut and Brown's woods, Waterworks Park and Impounding Reservoir. The Des Moines "Register" carried a story of the field trip on its front page and the entire bird list was printed. A small party took a count in the Iowa City region on May 12, with a total of 124 species. Fred Kent describes this trip: "5 a. m. to 7:30 p. m. Drs. Laude, Loehning, Baldwin and myself. Out at 5 a. m. to the park, river area and farm near town, with a count of 74 by 8 o'clock, when a heavy shower sent us in; then out toward Amana and the lake, where we spent the rest of the day. The weather cleared and we were joined by Mrs. Laude, Mrs. Kent and Shirley Briggs, equipped with a generous fried chicken lunch. About dusk scattered thunder showers sent part of the group back, but Dr. Baldwin and I waited in the Amana woods for the Barred Owl and Whip-poor-wills. Our count included only three shore-birds.—Killdeer, Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers. Swan Lake and other suitable territory was still dried up. Warblers were not numerous but well represented. Two broods of young Wood Ducks were an early record for this area."